

# REMARKS

In this response, claims 8, 9, 11 and 13-14 have been amended, claim 10 has been cancelled and no claims have been added. Accordingly, claims 1-9, 11-22 and 24-29 remain pending in the present application. Reconsideration of the above-identified patent application is hereby requested.

## Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

Claims 8-9 and 13-14 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,954,650, issued to Saito et al. (herein Saito). Specifically, the Examiner has rejected these claims as the Examiner has asserted that all the limitations of these claims are taught by Saito. Reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection is requested in view of the following discussion.

Applicant disagrees with the Examiner. However, solely to speed up prosecution and obtain allowance of the allowable subject matter and without abandoning any breadth of claim scope, Applicant has placed the allowable claims in condition for allowance. Applicant reserves the right to file a continuation for the canceled claims. The allowable subject matter of claim 10 was added to claim 8.

Allowable Subject Matter

Applicant would like to thank the Examiner for allowing Claims 1-7, 15-22, and 24-29 and indicating that patentable subject matter is present in claims 10-12.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, it is believed that all claims now pending patentably define the subject invention over the prior art of record and are in condition for allowance and such action is earnestly solicited at the earliest possible date.

Respectfully submitted,

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